



NEWS RELEASE

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Forward Thinking, High Achieving.

MCPS Trustees continue board study sessions on Smart Schools 2020 Plan

On Thursday, May 28, 2015 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., the Missoula County Public Schools Trustees will meet in a special study session to discuss the Smart Schools 2020 Plan. Trustees started these study sessions in October of 2014 to review recommendations presented from the Facilities Strategic Plan Steering Committee in June 2014. As of May 12, 2015, trustees unanimously supported two bonds to fund the projects outlined in the Smart Schools 2020 plan that will be presented to voters on November 3, 2015.

The plan includes deferred maintenance, technology, safety and security, and updated learning space improvements to every MCPS school. At the meeting Thursday night, trustees will be asked to adopt election resolutions and grant permission to bid for the services of owner's representatives, architects and general contractors in connection with the bond projects.

The bidding for these services will take place during the summer of 2015 in order to have partners identified in the fall of 2015. In the event that Missoula voters pass the bond projects in the elementary and high school districts, MCPS will be ready to start design on priority projects right away. "This is standard operating procedure for a district contemplating a large bond issue. We are just doing our due diligence now to save the taxpayer's money later," noted Dr. Apostle, Superintendent of Missoula County Public Schools.

A demographic study and capacity analysis completed by McKibben Demographics and CTA Architects Engineers reveals that by the 2017-18 school year, MCPS will have 488 additional elementary students and by the 2021-22 school year, 392 additional middle school students enrolled in district schools. The result, in 2017-18 seven out of nine elementary schools will be at or above capacity. In the current school year, students were "leveled" out of 8 of the 9 neighborhood elementary schools due to overcrowding issues in specific grade levels within each school.

By 2021-22, all three middle schools will be over capacity. The District will see an increase in enrollment of almost 900 students by the 2022-23 school year. The current school year represents the lowest enrollment MCPS will see in the next decade.

In addition to capacity issues, all MCPS buildings need support for continued maintenance and energy efficiency upgrades.

A 2015 poll of likely Missoula voters indicates that over 65% of Missoulians would support an elementary and high school bond to fund necessary deferred maintenance improvements, technology infrastructure improvements and provide more space to support over crowding issues.

Detailed information about the meeting can be found on the public meeting calendar on the District's website at <http://www.mcpsmt.org>. For additional information, contact Hatton Littman at 728-2400, ext. 1024 or via email at hlittman@mcps.k12.mt.us.

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